

JOHN MUNROE

and Old Barnstable

1784-1879

SKETCH OF A GOOD LIFE

AN ANNIVERSARY TRIBUTE

By ELIZABETH MUNROE

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PREFACE.

BRIEF history of the Munroe Family before their coming to America is given in a Genealogical Record from which I quote the following: William Munroe was the first person of the name known in America. In one of the bloody contests between the crown and the people in the reign of Charles 1st, William Munroe, who was a soldier in the King's army and a loyalist, was taken prisoner by Cromwell at the Battle of Dunbar on the heights of Scotland. For this he was exiled from his country and with a shipload of soldiers sent to America. This was in 1640, twenty years after the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth. As prisoners of war they were compelled to work three days in the week for their masters and three for themselves. After a time they were able to buy their Freedom, and from this were called Redemptioners. They established their homes in Lexington, and History tells us that being an united family, they built

their houses together, each one making his house an addition to the next, so that the long row of one story buildings resembled a Rope work. Though William Munroe championed a cause that failed and was sacrificed to the will of a tyrant, he was a true patriot to his King and country, and for his loyalty banished with many others from home and exiled to America. Though in England the established authority was overthrown and kingly rule assumed by a usurper, it nevertheless proved the beginning of a Constitutional Government and gave the people their first authority in the making of laws and later establishing the Parliament of two houses, Lords and Commons, the established rule of England today.

CHAPTER I.

My Father's Family.



THIS is the thirtieth anniversary of my dear father's death, and as the years go by I feel impelled to put on record some events of what from a retrospective view, was a remarkable life. This I do especially for the pleasure, and also as I hope profit, of his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and take up the pleasant task for love of him and them. As the youngest of his family, I regret to have but little better authority than what memory furnishes, as many events of his early life are only hearsay.

John Munroe was born in West Roxbury, October 11, 1784. He was one of five sons and two daughters, who died in infancy. The sons grew to manhood. My father's father was Genl. Jonathan Parker, one of the leading soldiers in the Revolution. He mustered one of the first companies to resist the British at Lexington, and was present at the famous Tea Party in Boston.

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He belonged to the family from whom Rev. Theodore Parker descended, and lived on the hill at Brookline which takes its name from the family of Parker Hill. (My father's mother Abigail Parker was born in 1753, and at the age of twenty was married to my grandfather Daniel Munroe, born in Lexington and also of Revolutionary descent.) Col. Robert Munroe was in the skirmish at Lexington with the British when on their way to Concord for the capture of military stores they were met by the Colonists, and was said to have fired the first shot on the American side. He was wounded in the morning in the elbow, and while still bleeding he remounted his horse and continued on the field till the afternoon, when fainting from loss of blood he was compelled to retire from the field. Among Continental relics at the Old South church, Boston, may be seen the musket from which the shot was fired. This brief outline is taken from a book of more explicit details owned by our cousin, Miss

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Mary Munroe of Concord, recently deceased.

[My grandfather's family lived for many years in Roxbury and some of his children were born there. Their names, which I give according to ages, were William, Daniel, Nathaniel, John, Charles and Abigail, who was named for her mother, all of whom I recall having seen at my father's house in Barnstable. William Munroe lived in Concord and had four sons and three daughters. William the father was the first and only maker for many years of the lead pencil, by which with his business as cabinet maker he amassed a handsome fortune. Nathaniel lived in Baltimore and had one son and three daughters. His descendants live now in Boston, the children of Franklin Haven who built the large house on the corner of Mt. Vernon and West Cedar Sts. Daniel Munroe lived in Boston and has one daughter and granddaughters still in its vicinity. When quite young my father, being in poor health, was advised by the elder Dr. Warren to make a home in

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the country, embarked on a vessel for a trip to Virginia, where he was advised to go for the winter. A severe storm arose, when the vessel anchored at Hyannis. While waiting for an abatement of the storm my father took a trip to the village of Barnstable, and being favorably impressed with the place decided to settle there. To go back a little I must tell from certain hints that he was always active, courageous and fond of certain kind of amusement. As a boy I am sure he was fond of games, and after he gave up business and retired for several years in the winter to Cambridge he often wandered to the Common where he was always interested in seeing the baseball games, and even to the last hours of his life he was mentally and physically alive and alert. After he was past ninety I often went with him to call on Mr. Samuel Curtis of Boston, who was the same age, and with great joy they talked of trundling hoop together when boys around Jamaica pond. I have often since living in Boston driven with

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a friend around the edge of the hill which overhangs the pond, and recognize the very path close to the pond where he must have trundled his hoop when a little boy. My grandfather removed his family to Boston when his children were young. They lived at the North End, which in those days was the Court End of the town. My father recalled that in conversation with his father and a friend he remembered hearing said that the North End was getting so crowded he feared he might have to go out to Beacon Street, where the land in the country was cheaper. My grandfather however remained at the North End until his death, until after my sister Susan went to Boston to school, as she recalled her experiences in dancing school, etc., when she lived with my grandmother. Later on she removed to Allen Street at the West End. I regret not to know on what street was my grandmother's home at the North End, but as she was an attendant at Dr. Parkman's church, now standing at the corner of Clark

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and Hanover Streets, it could not have been far away from that point.

This Dr. Parkman to whom I have alluded was one of two brothers whose dwelling was the large gray stone house within my memory facing Bowdoin Square. The two brothers were Francis and Henry, one a minister and the other a doctor. Henry being accosted in the street one day as Doctor, answered, "I am the one who preaches and my brother practices." The latter afterwards became famous as the man Webster murdered, for which crime he suffered the extreme penalty of the law. My father distinctly remembered the two men, brothers Parkman, and always felt had Dr. Webster confessed his crime at once, the sympathy of the people would have been for him, for Dr. Parkman, though a strictly honorable man, had an uncompromising nature and one entirely unable to cope with the loose, easy going morals of Webster. In a fit of passion he committed the crime to which he was

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aggravated, and he would have repented, but he had not the moral courage to confess it.

After awhile my grandmother removed to make a home with her son in Concord, and from there my father took her to his home in Barnstable, where she died May 1, 1844.

Here I will diverge a little from our family sketch to tell the children who cannot recall her of her appearance. She was a tall, stately woman with piercing black eyes and a ruddy complexion. She was quite fond of dress and nothing that could be bought was too good for her. On her arrival we were quite impressed with the elegance of her long satin cloak with its double capes trimmed with thread lace. When her caps which she always wore were renewed she was quite distressed, fearing in the country she might not find the thread lace to trim them. Her big leg-horn bonnet, more in shape like some hats of present style, was kept in the largest band box in the house, and seldom saw the light of day as she never went

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out. Although a woman with courage enough to live alone in a Boston house, she nevertheless was wildly distressed at the sight of a spider, and I amusingly recall the frantic jig she performed one day in the dining room, where with her dress upraised and her eyes wild with fright she rushed about the room.

My father was very happy to have her under his roof, and as the years went on and she was unable to come down stairs to the table he never failed to make his daily visits to her room, where before her open fire she recounted the events of her youth with much zest, while my dear father listened delighted. She had an affectionate nature, and I recall her saying with much feeling, "Oh John, how I did love my five little boys." I think she had a happy ending to her long life in our family of mother, father and six daughters, and on gala occasions when my sisters dressed for their village balls and parties, she must always have them come to her room to be approved and ad-

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mired. In the winter of 1843 she had a slight shock of paralysis, after which she never left her bed, most of the time in a semi-conscious condition, in which she died, May 1, 1844. I was twelve years old at that time and remember my sister Caroline and I were dressed in black as were all the other members of the family. It was evidently the custom of the times, and I recall the delight we had in our dark lavender mousseline de lane skirts and black velvet waists. It may have been conventional in those days to dress children in mourning, but the feeling in my father I think was not to omit the smallest respect due to his beloved mother.

I have alluded to Samuel Curtis as an acquaintance of my father, which he renewed at ninety years of age in Boston. His wife was quite a remarkable horseback rider in her youth, often mounting a horse in the riding school for the first time and training it for ladies' use. One day when about seven years old, on my return from school I

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was surprised to find Grandmother sitting in the parlor in her best black satin dress before an open fire entertaining two fine ladies from Boston. They were Mrs. Curtis and her niece Mrs. Briggs, who had come all the way from Boston on horseback to visit Grandma. They remained over night and the next morning left to proceed on the trip to Chatham. In those days of sandy roads the enterprise was considered quite heroic, and after they left we heard their husbands started from Boston, but on reaching Plymouth turned back discouraged at the long tiresome journey.

CHAPTER II.

Early Life in Barnstable.



His advent to Barnstable occurred in 1809. His work as watch maker was the first, and for very many years the only one, of its kind on Cape Cod, so that he had all the patronage from Falmouth to Provincetown. He seized the opportunity and then and there with only his own two hands began his life's work. He first introduced the tall mahogany eight day clocks, manufactured by his brothers Nathaniel, Daniel and William, several of which are still standing in the old homes of Barnstable.

Soon after his coming there he met my mother, to whom he was married the following year. My mother's father, Timothy Phinney, was keeping at that time the large family store now standing at the corner of Hyannis Road, in the west ell of the house afterwards owned and occupied by David Crocker, Esq., for many years sheriff of Barnstable Coun-

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ty. My grandfather was living at that time in the large house now occupied by Miss Sarah Bacon, in the north parlor of which my mother was married in 1810.

The house in Pine Lane was their home for a year, when my father purchased the house now in Barnstable which from 1811 to this time has been the home of that grandfather whom his grandchildren remember. When first occupied by my father and mother as a young couple, it was a low single house, and remained such till 1834, when it was raised to its present size. As a low house the walls were of unusual height. It was built by a carpenter by the name of Jabez Allen, for his own use, and the timbers of old oak are today unusual in size and still perfectly sound. To this home my father took his young wife and beneath its roof all the nine children were born. The furniture now in the rear parlor was their first, and consists of eight flagged seated chairs, a mahogany sofa, two mahogany card tables, two small

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mahogany light stands, so called in the days when brass lamps and candles only were used. The gilt framed mirror with a landscape picture at the top, and the landscape in floss work wrought by Nancy Phinney are the two wall decorations that have been there from the time of my earliest remembrance. A large Franklin fireplace (so called because invented by Benjamin Franklin) helped essentially in lighting as well as heating the room, which was the family sitting room. On the top of the fire frame was a large sheet iron drum bound with brass, from both sides of which pipes extended to the chimney, which thoroughly warmed the room and bedroom adjoining. In the left corner of this room is the French brass student lamp which my father called his watchmaker's lamp. Many and many an evening has he sat by it plying his fingers at the work which employed his hands—hands that were never idle in the early days of his life when he followed his diligent

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trade to keep his flock warmed, clothed and fed and to drive the wolf from the door.

In his frequent trips to Boston he took always with him a full memorandum of family wants and needs, partly from the necessity imposed and more that he felt the country did not furnish the best, which he was always ambitious of in everything we wore,—shoes, stockings, dresses, hats, bonnets, etc., were important items in his long and generous list of family wants.

My father's work began in a little shop nearly opposite, on the corner of what is now the driveway to the residence of Mr. Henry Mortimer.

An incident in my father's early life illustrates so fully the integrity of character elemental in my father that I must give it here a brief paragraph. The house was near the Crocker Tavern, and as cardplaying was the favorite pastime of those days, he and the village young men frequently assembled there for that pleasure. He had been married about a year, and having

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been several evenings in the week to play cards, one Saturday night he put on his coat to go as usual. I could imagine as he related the incident to me the gentle way in which my mother reminded him that he had been very often, and he said, "I realized the habit was controlling me," and with his characteristic earnestness he told me, "I took off my coat and I never went again." Trifling as this was in itself it meant an instinctive integrity which governed him in all the acts of his long life, in which duty and conscience controlled in the small as well as the larger duties that came to him.

After his business increased, and with that his responsibilities, he never hesitated in his visits to Boston in the interests of his bank, to do the smallest favors to please us young children, who, I fear, did not realize what it meant to him; but if irksome, it always seemed to him the greatest delight to gratify us in every possible wish and way.

CHAPTER III.

Early Days. Piano, etc.



COUNTRY life in early days, if somewhat narrow and self-centered, seems in retrospect much more individual and interesting than now, when railroads bring one in constant touch with larger life and blend country and city into one. Until the middle of the nineteenth century communication with the city was made three-fourths of the year in sailing vessels. Three neat and comfortable packets made tri-weekly trips to Boston, often in summer steamboats alternating between from June to October. They were filled with passengers, who from the deck in comfortable cushioned chairs enjoyed the lovely blue water and pretty green shore, which at intervals were seen all the way from wharf to wharf. The last trip was usually made in November, just before the yearly Thanksgiving. How vividly I recall that happy time when my father made his

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last season's trip! With what eager eyes we children watched from our high attic window to catch a first glimpse of the vessel's topsail, bringing to us our dear father with all his winter treasures, and then what excitement when the carts came up the yard filled with stores of good things, barrels, boxes, etc. For he bought besides these all our winter clothing, dresses, bonnets, shoes, cloaks, beside the attractive purchases for his jewelry shop, which stood at the end of our yard on the street.

The little shop still stands, though removed back from the street to meet a demand for wider roads. The sight of it still recalls memories most dear as the hallowed place where, day after day, year in and year out, he plied his busy fingers to keep his big family warmed, fed and clothed. The joy of those youthful days, so scant of resources as compared with present times, and yet full of all the best that makes life worth living!

One special event looms before

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my memory even to this day as I recall the arrival of my father one Sunday morning in summer, bringing to my sister Carrie and myself our first parasol. The handle was ivory, with a ring in it, and the end had a twisted top. My sister Jane told us that it was made of Levantine satin, and we spent most of the day in trying to spell Levantine. We were much too excited to go to church, but we walked all over the house with them over our heads till afternoon, when we took them into the fields, the only place children were allowed to walk on Sunday. The next morning mother said we could take them to school, but we must let the girls (most of them in the neighborhood had come to see the parasols) carry them a part of the way. I think we both ventured to wish they had been blue, but my mother said that green was better for our eyes, so we were reconciled. Years have passed with their many joys as well as sorrows, but nothing eclipses to this hour the joy of my first parasol. As a rival

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treasure I remember among other delights that of a pair of white kid shoes, which I took off in Sunday school and showed to the girls in my class the name of John Reed, Washington street.

My dear sister Sarah when in her teens was afflicted for a long time with lameness in her right arm, which rendered it useless. The sympathy of my father was always so touched by any sickness of his dear children that she became for the time being the pet of the family. On the return from one of his visits to Boston he brought a large, mysterious box, which he opened and displayed a most beautiful blue satin bonnet, trimmed with lovely blue and white marabout feathers. I remember to this day how my sister Carrie and I held our breath as we regarded with admiration, (though not with envy, I am sure) on this dream of beauty. We were a most happy family, I know, and through life have shared each other's joys and wept each other's tears.

The next most delightful event I recall was the arrival of a

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piano. It was made of mahogany and as a piece of furniture was an ornamental addition to our parlor. It came without an inkling of its arrival and we were wild with delight. My sister Abby, who was about returning from a visit to Barre, was informed of the new piano and extended her visit that she might have lessons. On her return she brought several pretty songs from her teacher, Miss Perry, which we thought very beautiful, especially "Oh Where Do Fairies Hide Their Heads?" From time to time every member of the family availed themselves of opportunities for music lessons, in New Bedford and elsewhere, as we could find teachers.

The first sorrow in my father's family circle was the death of little Sarah, as my mother always called her. She died in May, 1826. My sister Jane described her as fair-haired, with soft blue eyes and pink cheeks, and the youngest in the home at the time of her death. The event made a sad and lasting impression on my sister Jane who was then

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eleven. She in later times often spoke of the inconsolable sorrow she felt and with what grief and despair her young heart was touched.

In 1832 my father's oldest daughter Susan was married to Albert Alden, a lineal descendant of John Alden. The young couple went immediately to Lancaster, where they made a delightful home in one of the old families there. Lancaster was a charming town where artists and people of some note resorted, and in the refined atmosphere of the place my sister and her husband spent several years of their first married life. In the house where they made a temporary home for five years lived Gen. Lee, the English consul, also Jerome Thompson, quite a noted artist of his time. He painted the portrait of sister Susan, which now hangs in the hall of the Barnstable house.

I wish my nieces and nephews who do not remember their Uncle Albert, to know that he had a refined artistic taste, which he devoted to the art of lithography.

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This became his occupation, and some of his work was the illustrating of the first pictorial magazine in this country. Steel engraving was not then known in America, and all the illustrated books such as Heath's Book of Beauty Annuals and the like were imported from England. Photography was not thought of till many years after, when what is equivalent to it now were first called Sun pictures. Daguerreotypes were named from a Frenchman by the name of Daguerre, who first discovered the art of what is now the negative from which a photograph is transferred to paper. From Lancaster they moved to Barre, where they made a pleasant home and many delightful friends and where also all our family from time to time loved to visit for the invigorating atmosphere and agreeable society. The Lancaster Unitarian church had as its pastor Dr. Nathaniel Thayer, a type of dignified clergymen in the Unitarian faith whose legacy to this world has been an example to copy and respect. Rev Paul

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Frothingham of the Arlington street church is a lineal descendant. From Lancaster he came to Boston and preached in the First church in Chauncey street. In the present First church on Marlboro street is a tablet to his memory.

CHAPTER IV.

My Sister Susan's Children.



MARY Alden, my sister Susan's oldest child, was born in Barre, September 8, 1840. She was a girl whose loveliness of character and person it is easier to underrate than to overrate. Her charm of face and manner attracted many friends, and in her school life, especially with her teachers, she was a beloved favorite. She loved poetry and before ten years old wrote several pretty verses, and at the time of her death at twenty-four her mother collected her poems and published them with a picture of her sweet face as a frontispiece. At school she took prizes in all her studies and at her graduation from the Cambridge high school was chosen to write the Class Ode, on which occasion William Everett wrote the Class Oration. She had a sweet temper, though highly sensitive and affectionate. Her nature was religious and when young she became a member of the Unitarian church in

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East Cambridge. Rev Mr Holland, its minister, was deeply interested and aided her much in her reading and study. She was almost never without a book in her hand and had a taste for reading much beyond that of her years. But even before her school days were ended her health failed and her mother, hoping change of air and climate might save her, took her to the highlands of the Hudson. But she perceptibly declined and was brought to Barnstable, where she died on the 24th of May, 1865.

Lizzie Munroe Alden was in some ways more remarkable than her sister Mary. She was full of life and spirit with a keen sense of the ridiculous, and possessed a mind and taste so beyond her years that to say she was a genius seems the best explanation of her talent. At ten years of age she would hear a hymn at church that pleased her and repeat every word of it after a second reading. At one time her sister Mary had been to the theatre and heard a performance

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of the "Merchant of Venice," and in describing Portia to her mother she began to repeat "The quality of mercy," etc., when Lizzie interrupted her, "No, Mary, that isn't right." So up she jumped into her chair and with gesticulation she went through the whole speech without her mother's knowledge that she had ever read a word of it. She had a great love of flowers, and with her little chair would march out into the garden and crossing her knee sit with her pencil and paper drawing perfect outline pictures of pansies (which she said was her favorite flower). She was never without a flower pinned to her waist. During her illness, which was what we called an old-fashioned consumption, she was never without a flower and often would wake in the night and ask for a flower to hold in her hand. Her temperament was vivacious to a degree, and she and Charlie Allen, who were mutual admirers, would sit on the doorstep by the hour together, amusing themselves and us with their merry giggle.

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Charlie Allen was Lizzie's ideal, and their comradeship was very real and a sweet memory of them both. She was only ten when she died, and I always felt her big mind was too much for her little delicate body.

All these misfortunes touched my father's heart very deeply and there was no occasion when he could show his sympathy and love that he failed to do so. My sister Susan's deafness gave him much excuse for unusual expressions of sympathy in every way, and after the loss of her children he never came to Boston that he would not steal a few moments to go to East Cambridge for a call.

My brother-in-law, Albert Alden, retained a long service in the Custom House and with my sister lived their quiet but lonely lives in Cambridge till late in the year 1882 my brother developed a heart trouble, from which he died in 1884. This left my sister very lonely and helpless, and in the spring following she removed to Cambridge and from thence to Barnstable, which

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was a permanent home till her death in 1895. She accompanied us to and from Cambridge and her last years were, though lonely, occupied with her favorite employment of needlework and reading, with which the Barnstable library kept her furnished. She was a constant reader and it was good to feel that she with all her sad losses could spend her last days in her own chosen way. The cemetery at Barnstable was the spot where my brother Albert often said he hoped his bones would be laid. So on the green hillside which overlooks the sunrise and sunset, he and his whole family sleep. As he was especially fond of Gray's *Elegy* I will close this brief account with the words he so much loved:

“The curfew tolls the knell of
parting day,
The lowing herd winds slowly
o’er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods
his weary way
And leaves the world to darkness
and to me.”

CHAPTER V.

Aunt Mercy.



IN early New England days before the coming of foreigners for domestic service, every family had a helper. Usually it was a village girl who went into large families to assist in all kinds of work, such as the care of children, sewing, knitting and usual housework. In our village lived an interesting character whom we children called Aunt Mercy, and whose memory is that of a unique personality and old friend whom all children loved. When young, from an attack of measles she lost the sight of one eye, but nothing escaped the notice of the one left and all her faculties, especially her speech, were ready and quick. With a sense of humor she at all times regaled herself and her friends. After years of service were over she took care of her father and mother until their death. Subsequently a kind relative left her a little apartment, which she neatly kept till her

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death. Occasionally after her working days were over she would put on her bonnet and appear at our house saying she had come down to spend the afternoon in Heaven with my father and mother, who welcomed her cordially.

Nothing perished with her for want of utterance and she had a most reckless way of telling any and everybody her opinion of them, which with her good-natured frankness and the amusement it gave her was taken in good part. She was a regular Mrs. Partington in her twisting of words, and would tell my mother she had found a beautiful rule of cake with all the ingregements. One day she encountered in the street a gentleman, formerly one of the Barnstable boys, who had become a merchant prince of Boston. As he had grown to a six footer and naturally somewhat changed he accosted her with, "Aunt Mercy, do you remember me?" She repeated, "Do I remember you? I guess I shall never forget when you sat on my lap and I warmed

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your little toes at the fire. You had some pretty curls then and your mother thought you was beautiful. You are homely enough now, but folks tell me you are awful rich."

She had a brother who was a Methodist minister and in a series of revival meetings was supposed to have made a convert of Mercy, a rumor she rather resented and which she secretly confided to my father. Because it was her brother Ben she seemed to distrust his ability to do the thing properly. "He told me," she said, "I must have a new heart, but I said, 'Fiddlestick, I rather have a new wash-tub,' " and added, "I'll be whipped if he isn't trying to make me join his church." A short time after this interview my father and I took a walk to the Methodist church on Sunday. The minister preached from the text "Go to the ant, thou sluggard, and be wise." After the service she discovered our presence (for if she wanted to see, her one eye was quite equal to the occasion) and in a tone aud-

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ible all over the small church she said, "Well, well, Mr. Munroe, I don't take any of that kind of sermon to myself, for you know I never was lazy, and as for preaching about ants, I suppose it's well enough to crack them up but I think they are pesky things enough and no good anyhow."

She took a trip to Boston in the packet. When she returned Boston was having a scare about small pox and she came home quite excited about it. "I couldn't help laughing," she said, "to think if I had got it and died how grand it would have been to be brought home in the packet with me on board sailing up the harbor with colors half mast." You would have thought her rather disappointed that she had missed the chance of such a grand reception in the village.

She kept house at one time for a bachelor in the town who had long been feeble and failing, so slowly that she became very impatient, apparently seeming to feel he had lived

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unreasonably long. So quite in earnest she said to my father, "Do you suppose, Mr. Mumroe, the Lord has forgotten all about him?" Her entire faith in the Lord she always kept and made him responsible for what she approved as well as what she considered his mistakes. A means of grace to her was a sister member of the Methodist church who was inclined to be frivolous and always twitting Mercy about getting married, etc. One day she met Mercy in the street and announced her own engagement. This was like an electric shock to poor Mercy but she was equal to the occasion and with rather an original congratulation said, "Marry! Who for Heaven's sake is going to marry you?" The man was a stranger to Mercy but she said, "Well I hope I am thankful you have got a beau at last, for it has been nothing but marry, marry, till you have worried the flesh all off your bones. Do for pity's sake marry him quick before he gets off the notion of you."

Her flowery account she gave

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of a wedding she heard described was the most amusing tangle: she got the bride's trousseau all mixed up with the bridegroom's and had the bride dressed in black lace and the man in white satin, the narrative which she rehearsed at the village tavern much to the amusement of an audience she drew around her. They laughed and they laughed, she said. To laugh at Life and Death and Immortality was Aunt Mercy's way of covering much really tender serious feeling, for she could cry as easily, and in her own sympathetic way use the same endearing tone to a cat or dog as to a human being.

The man in the village who kept the typical country store with its usual incongruous variety occasionally made an innovation upon the undertaker's specialty, and on going into his place one day Mercy discovered a coffin in readiness apparently for a funeral. "Well! Well!" she said to the man, "what wont you keep next? Is this one of the things you have marked down? If it is, I don't know but I will

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“speak for it. All I am afraid of is that I shan’t have good clothes enough to wear with all this satin lining that looks so nice. It would make my back ache to have to lie so still.”

One bitter winter morning she came to spend the day with my mother and father and to pay her respects to my sister Jane, who was visiting them. Toward night she grew feverish and was persuaded to spend the night. She grew very ill and the doctor who was called to her early in the morning pronounced her case malignant erysipelas. She remained six weeks and was cared for by my good sister Jane as if she had been our very own. The last years of her life were in her own home, where she died, and where in every home she was known and loved and missed.

The service that succeeded the old-fashioned helper were from the village of Mashpee. This was a large Indian settlement in the extreme southwest town of Barnstable, where from the town’s earliest existence these natives lived. For many years

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the people were wards of the state. Later, when schools were established and they had acquired an elementary education, the legislature granted them the rights of citizenship, with the privilege of voting and representation.

The town had a large territory of cranberry bogs, which yielded them money, and as they had much intelligence as workers they subsequently became prosperous and enlightened. Latterly they intermarried with negroes and as a natural result have deteriorated physically. They were naturally large and strong and made excellent capable servants. The last of the race whom I remember was a tall, nice looking Indian by the name of Dinah, with a small, insignificant looking husband of whom she seemed to be in mortal dread. Invariably he would make his appearance soon after she came to us and demand all her money, which she never dared refuse. Her last visit was about forty-six years ago, when she came to us and gave a most timely service during

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the last illness of my dear niece Mary Alden. She was a gentle and devoted nurse, and at that time was a great assistance and comfort to us all.

In our own town lived a family of Greenough by name. They were all unusually intelligent and capable, and I have heard my father say that a chief by that name was a wise man of good judgment and good sense, whom they called Judge Greenough. This meant that in any question of rights or disagreement he acted as adviser, and held the same wise position to his people in settling questions of right and wrong, and to his judgment they gave the ultimate decision. There still lives in Yarmouth one of the daughters who is now ninety-two years old. She is bright and capable and keeps her own little home as neat and clean as a new dime. She is known in the town and outside it as the premium maker of wedding cake, and not long since one of the village millionaires near her home would

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have no one's wedding cake but Susannah's.

My father told me at one time in days when mail was carried on horseback that the carrier on his way to Mashpee, ten miles from Barnstable, was overtaken by an Indian woman in the woods a little this side the village. She asked the mail carrier to let her ride on the saddle behind him. He did so, but on approaching the town, not wishing to enter with a squaw on pillion fashion, he whipped up his horse thinking to shake her off. On the contrary the old squaw said, "That's right, Massa, when I nide I love to nide." My mother used to tell me this story, laughing till the tears ran down her cheek, without any audible sound, in which she resembled her father, our Grandfather Phinney, of whom my sister Jane used to say that in many ways she was a perfect faesimile.

In this connection something occurs which I will give place to, though trivial and quite unimportant save as it confirms my sister's words. When I was a

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school girl, a sea captain brought from one of his voyages a very obstinate but mild and gentle donkey. Capt. Thomas Harris, who owned the little beast, very kindly loaned it to the village children and it came my turn to entertain him for a week's visit. Every day in the morning, at noon and after school the yard at the back of our house was a village carnival, which has never been exceeded since or rivalled even, except by the cattle show. The crisis came, however, one morning when as I was mounted for a pillion ride with one of the school boys, the little Jack, either intentionally, as I suspected, or in a moment of excitement, with which the atmosphere was charged, kicked up his heels and I was ingloriously laid low on the ground and much lower in my mind. My mother stood at her window, as she usually did when the donkey show was on, laughing with the tears running down her cheeks at this circus, until she found I had barely escaped a broken arm, when the loved but long lost treasure was

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walked out of the yard at a much more rapid pace than he walked into it, followed by a procession of defeated admirers. The event was never spoken of or alluded to that my mother did not almost shake herself into hysterics at my inglorious downfall.

CHAPTER VI.

Education.



ONE of the difficult problems confronting my father's country life was the education of his children. I think I have previously spoken of my sister Susan, who was sent to Boston to my grandmother for her education. There she was taught the accomplishments as known then, dancing, painting, drawing, etc. It was quite a trial to her parents to send her away from home, as she was the oldest daughter, but her deafness appearing when young made them doubly solicitous of all possible advantages to overcome the many hindrances she would naturally feel. But there were other daughters to educate, and my father came to Boston to the Temple to induce Miss Esther Sturgis to come to Barnstable to teach his little girls. She consented, and a room was procured in the Hinckley house, then in Bow Lane, where she began her school with seven

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girls. Miss Esther Sturgis was the daughter of a Captain William Sturgis, whose family house was what is known as the Sturgis Library building. Miss Catharine Sturgis was the first who taught the older girls, and was after succeeded by her younger sister Esther, who was a fair haired lady of gentle manners and refinement.

The beautiful sewing occasionally seen now is a revival of the beautiful bead and needlework done at that time. I recall a lovely cap embroidered by my sister Susan and especially preserved as the christening cap, which went through the family of eight little girls at the christening ceremony before the altar of the Unitarian church.

To return to the question of schools in Barnstable. A corporation was formed and built an academy, which for our generation was a help. Greek, Latin and French were taught, besides English branches common to all schools. The academy was well equipped with globes and chemical apparatus and for awhile

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was a prosperous school. It lasted for about ten years and then for reasons I cannot explain was abandoned.

The next school my sister Caroline and I attended was at Yarmouthport. It was kept in the hall then used as a Swedenborgian church and its pastor was our teacher, Dr. Shove assisting in a French class. My sister Caroline and I were conveyed back and forth by Mr. Eben Bacon with his two daughters Sarah and Lucretia, who attended the school. In summer we were conveyed to the school in a small stage coach which came to Barnstable to bring passengers to the steamboat.

When thirteen years old I was sent to a girls' school in New Bedford, taught by the Misses Weston. I shall never forget my dreary journey in a lumbering stage coach, in which I set forth at four o'clock on a November morning to take alone my first long journey. To this day I recall the dismal experience with a shudder. The school as I think of it now was an ideal one.

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The teachers were women of refinement and culture and their method of teaching in advance of the times. Instead of crowding us with useless and uninteresting work their plan was to develop from within, in other words to give work that should train us to think for ourselves. Much of the teaching was oral, besides which we had our reading from poetry and history, on which notes were required and examined. She did what is much neglected in these days, viz., taught to read. This kind of instruction was versatile and full of interest. Merits were given for the best answers, as well as for our time of study outside the school, and for our music practice, drawing, painting and our progress in languages and translation exercises. It was there I imbibed my first taste of Browning, which has not only never left me but has grown with my growth and strengthened with my strength.

On returning from New Bedford a neighbor who wished to send her son to school at Har-

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wich consulted my father, who proposed my sister Carrie and I should take advantage of the arrangement, which we did and attended for a year. Mr Sidney Brooks was the principal, also teacher of languages and higher mathematics. The assistant taught French, music and drawing. Mr. Brooks was a delightful man and as we were from out of town he made our leisure days very agreeable. Every Saturday we took pleasure excursions, which he piloted, to various romantic places, of which there were many in the town and some most charming. Especially so were our picnics to Long pond, a lovely lake surrounded with wooded hills and groves, where in summer we found sail boats at our disposal, and in winter had most exhilarating trips in iceboats around and across the pond, ending in a sumptuous lunch and a horsecart ride home with any amount of singing and jollity. In a large hall over the school room Mr. Brooks placed a nice piano for the use of his pupils, especially for those from out of

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town, and it is putting it mildly to say we made the most of our opportunities. Occasionally our so-called entertainments included the village people, whom we were supposed to amuse with our so-called entertainments, tableaux, dancing, etc., in all of which various schemes for fun our good Mr. Brooks aided and encouraged in every reasonable way. Meanwhile a brisk revival was going on in the church opposite, and I question if the good Orthodox deacon with whom we boarded might not have had his qualms of conscience as to the propriety of our doings, but if so he shrewdly concealed it, though now and then in his morning prayers he relieved his feelings by a side thrust, which I am afraid was not heeded.

These were our last school days, to which happy time every one I believe looks back as best days, for the freedom from care and lightness of heart on which no continued responsibility rests. Long after the school days of his children were passed my father still retained his interest in the

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village schools in Barnstable, always contributing generously to efforts made for private schools, several of which were revived, though only for a short time. The public schools he did not much approve, and I remember attending only once with my sister Carrie, when after a few weeks we were told we might bring our books home, which we did without any questions.

CHAPTER VII.

Louisa's Marriage and Grandchildren.



I HAVE anticipated in my father's life some years of its early history which I must retrace to relate. The first break in the home was the marriage of my sister Louisa in 1837 to William H. Brown of Taunton. He kept a country store at Barnstable, in partnership with Matthew Cobb, a native of the town. The firm dissolved in about ten years, when my brother-in-law removed to Taunton with his family of two children. Two others were born to him there, where they lived until, after the marriage of their only daughter, they removed to New York and made a home with their two children when both were in established business.

His oldest son Thomas married in Taunton in 1858. When the war broke out he enlisted in a military company in that town. His regiment joined a brigade under Gen. Nathaniel Banks, who

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ordered his company in one of the times of inaction to Mobile, where he sickened with malarial fever and died in August, 1863. This was the first death of my father's grandchildren, and he often said that he recognized no difference in his interest and love between them and his very own. Thomas was a most lovable son, and to his tender-hearted, affectionate mother his loss was irreparable. While she never opposed him in the performance of what he recognized as a duty, she often said she was no Spartan mother, and his death from neglect was much more trying than had it been on a field of battle. She could never forgive Gen. Banks for what she felt was his unwise policy in ordering his men into a sickly climate in the hottest season. She had much, however, to console her in the report of her poor boy's kindness to many of the sick soldiers, whom he daily carried to the fields where he tried to protect them with canvass from the damp soil, even after he became so

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weak from the same disease that it was with difficulty he crawled in and out his own tent.

My poor sister lost all her own children, and after their death she took the care of her daughter's three children till her death in 1900. She was seventy years of age when she began a mother's charge of her little boy Clifford and his twin sisters, but she took the task with a hearty cheerfulness and a real interest that no young mother could have excelled. She had a great deal of taste and for many years bought and made all their little garments in the most exquisite and elaborate style, and never seemed happier than when she sat and sewed and trimmed and embroidered their beautiful clothes. As I think of her remarkable vivacity, her eelerity with needlework as her busy fingers flew to complete one task after another, I cannot but realize what her marvellous energy achieved and how in her way she was a counterpart of my father's persistency and spirit. She had outlived all her own

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children, but in the welfare of her little dependent grandchildren she put the energy of her whole heart and soul. Her husband outlived her by one year, when he was laid beside her in the Taunton cemetery, where the whole immediate family now repose. The memory of her sweet voice as she sang the pretty old songs, as the "Messenger Bird," "Child Amid the Flowers at Play," makes me realize what a charm her sweet voice had in the days before present methods had perverted the pleasure of singing into a labored effort in which the performer seems rather to agonize than to sing.

She was a woman of rare sweetness and amiability, with a generous nature, never happier than when doing some trifling act to give pleasure to others. She was remarkably quick and clever with her needle, and delighted in plying her busy fingers in making tasteful and useful gifts for her family and friends. As a child I recall to this day a sweet pink silk hat that she made for a wax doll my father

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had brought me and my sister Carrie from Boston. One of our early griefs was that in taking a drive with a relative of my mother's, who had come for a few days, in his carriage his hat was taken off by the wind and in rescuing it he dropped one rein, when the horse sheered onto a side embankment on the road, tipping the carriage over and in the accident breaking our wax dolls. As I pass the same place at the east end of the village to this day I recall what seemed then a cruel tragedy! What is the tie that binds our memories to the small woes of childhood, when between that and maturity so much that is more grievous heals without a scar and often holds not even a lingering memory! What but that youth is like wax to receive and marble to retain!

CHAPTER VIII.

First Visit to Boston,

Centennial, etc.

Reminiscences 1839.



MY first visit to Boston occurred about the time of my sister Louisa's marriage. I have thought a glimpse of the city seventy years ago might at least be somewhat amusing. I was the only one of the family who had never seen a city except New Bedford, and my good father detailed my sister Abby to accompany me with him to see the sights of Boston. We came to the city in the packet in the month of June. The chiefly recognizable features now are the Park St., King's Chapel and St. Paul churches, beside the old Chauncey St. church, which stood in the spot now Dewey Square. There was no Temple Place then, only a narrow passage from Washington to Tremont Sts., where posts with iron chains separated the sidewalk from a nar-

row footpath not wide enough for vehicles. The Tremont St. dwelling houses, now business places, faced what was called the Mall: a broad avenue surrounding the Common, bordered by beautiful English elms, a favorite mile walk before breakfast for good pedestrians. From West St. was a block of houses on Tremont called Cape Cod Row, so named from five Boston residents who originated from Barnstable, Daniel C. Bacon, James Davis, Prince Hawes, Thomas Grey and Lemuel Shaw. The latter was afterwards chief justice of Massachusetts and married Hope Savage, daughter of the prominent physician of Barnstable at that time. The Boston Museum was then a new attraction and my father took me to see the collection of minerals, wax statuary and other curiosities on the first floor, while above was the theatre, where we heard the Raner family of five singers in Swedish costumes. This troupe was succeeded by the Hutchinson family, who afterwards went to England and sang before the Queen. Subsequently

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the museum was known as a famous theatre with a permanent stock company and was very popular as the best in Boston, where its actors produced the old English drama, such as "The Lady of Lyons," "School for Scandal," "She Stoops to Conquer," etc. Copeland's was the famous confectionery store and the only place where ice cream could be had, and was near Madame Haven's restaurant.

For the novelty of a ride on the steam cars my father took us on the road to Cambridge and from thence in a chaise to Lexington to visit my mother's cousin Elias Phinney. He was living on a beautiful farm, which was given a premium as the finest in Massachusetts. The lovely fruit garden was enclosed by a hedge covered with pretty vines and foliage; inside were ripening and flourishing the fruits of every season.

Our week's visit in Boston was at a boarding house in Milk St., where I remember playing on the roof with a boy who was making firecrackers for the Fourth of

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July. This house was the home of my father in his frequent trips to town. Later the landlady, Mrs. Ripley, removed to Franklin Place, which was a charming street, in the centre of which was an oval park with statues of some prominent Boston worthies. Mrs. Ripley kept a most excellent house and was a lady of refinement and much beauty. This park which was opposite her home was destroyed by the fire of 1872. Opposite on each side lived the families of Crowninshield, Wigglesworth and other Boston men of note.

Our return from Boston was in the packet on a sunny afternoon in June, and though but eight years old, I remember the lovely sail down Boston harbor. Our companions were Mr and Mrs James Jenkins and Mr and Mrs Walter Bryant. The latter couple were making their wedding trip to Barnstable, where they were guests at my father's house.

The same year was the Barnstable Centennial celebration, September 8, 1839. On the eve

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of the event occurred what was known (and is now) as the Great Centennial gale, which extended the length of Cape Cod coast. My memory of it is impressed by a severe cut my father received in his hand, in attempting to secure from destruction a row of young trees he had just planted. These were the large Abeles which remained till another notable gale in 1898, nearly sixty years after, when the Portland was lost, so battered that they menaced the highway, and the whole ten trees my dear father had planted were hewn down. All that remains of them are the two stumps on either side of the carriage gate which are covered with vines.

To revert to the celebration. It brought many distinguished people to the old town, some of whom were lineal descendants of Barnstable families. Gorham Palfrey, who was one of its lineage, was the president, and Edward Everett was the orator of the day. In a pamphlet in my possession which records the event, it is stated that

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he held his audience spell-bound by his eloquence for two hours and a half. As the day was raw and chilly and the church so overflowed with listeners that many of the audience were obliged to stand outside on a temporary staging against the open windows, this statement is a very creditable testimony to the patience and long-suffering of the people seventy years ago.

The town was packed to overflowing with guests, and every nook and corner was utilized to hold them. Our own house was occupied with friends and relatives, and my father offered our parlors as a camping ground for stranded people, who were thankful for a sofa or chair even to rest upon. Before night the weather softened and doors were wide opened and all the crowd were made welcome and comfortable. The occasion ended with a grand ball, which was honored by the presence of the orators and other distinguished guests of the day. The Court house was utilized for the occasion by an extended pavilion, temporarily

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built as a grand ball room. It was lighted by oil lamps placed on brackets of eagles, highly gilded, beside endless candles, which made the room brightly illuminated. The ball was repeated the following night, with the same cotillion band and the presence of many left-over guests. This second evening the younger people were allowed to attend. I was eight years old, but remember to this day my dress of white muslin, blue sash and blue hair ribbons, with which I was decked. The younger children were allowed to stay till nine o'clock, which was a riotous dissipation for those days, when as youngest of the family I hardly ever had seen the moon.

As I remember, my great amusement was seeing my older sisters dress for the first ball. They entertained as a guest a tall dark lady with red cheeks and black eyes, who decked herself in a white satin, with pearl and diamond ornaments, and who I remember was, with her beauty, brilliancy and fine clothes, considered one of the belles of the

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ball. Her name was Mercy Perry, sister of the popular Dr. Perry of Boston fifty years (or more) ago.

The town had a glorious birthday party, and thirty years hence may some of my younger nieces and nephews be there to celebrate its next.

CHAPTER IX.

Savings Bank.



I MUST go back a little to recall what became to my father the most satisfactory work of his life. Coming to Barnstable as a stranger, and having a natural instinct of good citizenship, he looked about to discover what he could do for the community. This was in 1831. His business as the only clock and watch repairer in the county brought him in contact with the people in all parts of the Cape, and after establishing his business scarcely a day passed that the stages did not stop before his little shop, bringing him work from Provincetown to Falmouth. There was no public communication in any other way, express agents, etc., not having existed till twenty-five years after, when first appointed by the railroad company.

On the south side of Barnstable lived a large proportion of the seafaring class, most of whom were coasters and fishermen, be-

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sides many who were captains of ships in the Merchant line of foreign voyages. The occupation of the majority of young men was in summer, while in winter they were much of their time idle. With the generous and pleasure-loving disposition characteristic of young men who were chiefly sailors, the temptation was to spend much of their time in driving and other amusements, and so consuming most of the summer's earnings, and so my father reasoned that Barnstable was the place for a savings bank. For this purpose he called a meeting of the citizens of Barnstable village and proposed his plan. They came together in cordial response to the call, and formed a corporation of twelve men. They applied to the legislature for a charter, which was easily granted, and made my father treasurer. The names of the men were David Crocker, Ebenezer Bacon, Timothy Reed, Enoch T. Cobb, Loring Crocker, Nathan Crocker, Lothrop Davis, Josiah Hinckley, Henry Crocker,

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Barnabas Chipman, Isaac Davis, Thomas Percival.

The nearest savings bank at the time was at Plymouth, which had a deposit of thirty thousand dollars, and while the Barnstable Institution for Savings, as it was called, did not expect to compete with the Plymouth, they hoped to succeed. Enough to say that when my father resigned his office, after forty years of service, the bank had a deposit of one million and a half of dollars. It is to his credit that though there was a board of investment, they gave the whole responsibility to my father, and in no case where he followed exclusively his own judgment did he ever lose a dollar. In the making of notes, he required beside the legal demand of three names, that of collateral security to the full amount of the loan.

The bank, after the first few years, paid six, seven and eight per cent. This was before the legislature had passed restrictive laws on savings bank dividends, which has been done in late years. The success of this enter-

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prise was the pride and chief interest of his life. He labored to encourage the young men in neighboring villages to deposit in small sums, and so enable them to build houses and own their homes. Sometimes he made small mortgages, which he allowed them to pay at intervals as they could. Frequently he was rewarded by being told with gratitude which they expressed that for their homes they were indebted to him, which was the only reward he coveted.

Thus the Barnstable savings bank was pronounced by the commissioners, who made their tri-annual visits for examination of the County banks, to have an A 1 record, much to my father's delight and satisfaction. He did all the clerical work of the bank till 1859, when, on account partly of my sister Abby's marriage, he was obliged to have a clerk. She had always been his right hand assistant, auditing his accounts with him when his annual report was made, and in his absence in Boston was often called upon to pay off interest, receive

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deposits and help in many other ways.

The first year or two of the bank's existence he had no pay at all. After awhile he took fifty dollars, and though the work increased and hindered his own work, the salary was never above three hundred a year. In 1859, when he was obliged to have a clerk, the trustees allowed him fifteen hundred dollars. He gave the thousand to his clerk and took the five hundred himself, continuing this while he kept his office, making his trips to Boston and making all investments on his own responsibility. If he had the smallest errands to do for himself at the same time he paid expenses from his own pocket. He kept the office in his workshop, till in 1857 the corporation erected for an office the building facing Railroad avenue, where he continued till his resignation in 1871, after having held the position of treasurer and done its work for forty years.

In 1860, the first day of January, the corporation presented him a silver pitcher and salver,

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engraved with a testimonial of thanks for his faithful and long-continued service as treasurer. At the presentation of this gift his friends were quite amused at the modest tone of his acceptance of their gift, in which he expressed himself as quite unworthy such a valuable gift in return for his services. No one could realize, save his own family, what the interests of his one beloved bank meant to him, and how next to their own welfare it was his life's one great pride and pleasure. On his retirement as treasurer, they courteously made him president of the savings bank, but as the office meant no special active participation in its interest, time hung rather heavily on his hands, and for the first time in his life after his winter of leisure, he expressed a feeling of discontent and proposed we should all go to Cambridge for the winter. He was then eighty-eight years of age, as I might say eighty-eight years young, for his vigor and interest in life had never abated.

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and never did abate up to the very day of his death.

In his ninetieth year, after we had gone to Cambridge, he was one bitter cold day walking briskly as usual with one of my brothers-in-law, when suddenly he stopped and said to him, "William, do I walk too fast for you?" much to the amusement of William.

When in his eighty-sixth year he executed in one day an amount of work which I am sure most young men now would have considered beyond them. He started in the early train for Boston, wishing for certain reasons to return at night. His trip included collecting all his dividends on bank stock, where most investments were made. This was before the invention of elevators, when it involved climbing up and down many flights of stairs in high buildings, though not as high as now. However, it was a tiresome effort. He had occasion to make a mortgage, and to prove the title he must go to East Cambridge to examine the record. On returning he was

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doubtful about its validity, and to make assurance doubly sure he went a second time. He returned about three to Boston to take the train, when he went into Cornhill to buy a fire set of tongs, shovel and poker on an iron standard. He hurried to catch a car and after placing his heavy articles on the platform, jumped on himself after the car had started. He arrived at Barnstable after dark and finding no carriage at the station, brought his heavy iron load all the way to his door in his hand.

CHAPTER X.

Cambridge.

Anniversary Days,

Father's Birthday.



IN the resignation of his office at the savings bank, his family were quite apprehensive of the effect upon him of the sudden relinquishing his busy life's work, but he was not the man to falter at any duty, however great the sacrifice. My brother's solicitude lest that at his age some mistake might occur was finally his chief reason for resigning his work. He accepted the inevitable with cheerfulness of spirit and a determination to overcome the reluctance to give up his life's work.

The summer passed pleasantly, for a large place employed his care and time, and he seemed to be enjoying life in a leisurely way quite contrary to his usual custom. In pleasant days I recall him sitting in his chair in the front door yard at the foot

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of the steps, with my mother always beside him, both pictures of happy and peaceful old age. Books were an everlasting source of his pleasure, and in long summer days when he rose at sunrise, he would come to his breakfast with some historical fact to relate, as the result of his morning study. He never failed after breakfast in reading a chapter from his Bible, followed by a short prayer.

I have often felt, had he been in his right place he would have entered the ministry, for I do believe he had a more detailed knowledge of his Bible than many ministers. He would often criticize the mistakes made in the pulpit, and I heard him say in present times some of them studied everything but their Bible. I should say he might be called a Bible scholar. His Commentaries, encyclopedias and various books and notes of reference which he always kept by him are still in the house, and bring him constantly to my memory where they are kept as our best treasures. When in Cam-

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bridge he attended with my sister an adult Bible class, whose teacher was a professor in the Divinity school. At one meeting my father questioned the authority of a quotation the professor made, to which the professor replied "I should not think of contradicting a gentleman of your age, but will look it up." The following week he informed the class my father was right. It was with a natural pride that my sister liked to tell of this. He was at this time past ninety.

His proposal to go to Cambridge for the winter was the first intimation that time hung heavily on his hands, but the winter had been one of discontent, though never was a word of that expressed. He had previously bought a house in Cambridge for my sister Jane and her family, and to have a winter home for him and his family of four seemed to him as the happiest event to look forward to. His dear daughter Jane, with her large heart and motherly nature, accepted the proposition with her usual hospitable spirit, and to

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my father it seemed the happiest possible event (as it proved) to live under the same roof with her family. Though he never would admit the thought of any partiality towards his children, I can realize how it compensated much in the loss of his work to be with her. He took his daily trip into town in pleasant days, where he met old business friends, and returned to the cheerful evenings in her parlor, where assembled with her children and friends, varied by a game of cards, music and chat of the younger ones, his days glided pleasantly on. I am sure then had he known he should pass away under her friendly roof he would have felt nothing better could happen to him.

The year following he suggested renewing the carpets in our house in Barnstable, and took as lively an interest in buying them as if he were beginning his life again. He would have nothing but the very best five-body English Brussels, and the same carpets are now on the floor where they were placed

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thirty-six years ago. He was specially eager at the same time that the pretty needlework of my dear mother's hands should be preserved, so the footrests and chair seats, her dear handiwork, stand upon the carpet, and were duly christened by his nintieth birthday party, of which I will tell in another chapter.

Our anniversary days were the birthdays of my mother and father and Thanksgiving days. These were occasions of family reunions and of special interest at all times, Thanksgiving as a rule kept in the paternal home, and Xmas at New Bedford. The family, however large, was never too large to please my father, who was wont to say in his earnest tone that his happiest time was when his children were all gathered around the family table.

At Xmas all were invited to New Bedford, where my brother in the same hospitable spirit welcomed us heartily. The united relatives of my brother's wife, who had a large family connection, all joined, often made a party of over fifty guests. In

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the evening more young people came in, and games, dancing and general hilarity reigned.

The trains to New Bedford from the Cape were less continuous than now, and we had two long waits on the journey, when my brother never failed to come out from New Bedford to the junction to meet his dear father, mother and sisters, escorting us to the large, beautifully lighted house, where its attractive rooms, open fires and hospitable greeting awaited us. The Xmas time often tempted us to extend our visit, when great surprises that the trees contained, with numerous guests, added another anniversary jubilee, the recollection of which is kept by the first gold watch, or first gold thimble, etc., which are still in preservation.

On another anniversary, our Thanksgiving was kept at Yarmouthport, where my sister Susan and her family joined us in the generous welcome given by our dear brother James Knowles and my sister Carrie. Our last Thanksgiving was at Cambridge, where my brother James, sisters

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Susan, Jane and Louisa were invited to meet in my sister Jane's cheerful home. This was in 1873, and if my memory faithfully serves was the last Thanksgiving party held during my father's life, or indeed ever after. Loss of many grandchildren and various events in the family which saddened their spirit had made it easier to omit than observe, while it has ever been true that the same affectionate family love still binds the few that are left in closest affection, as when the circle narrows we come nearer together.

I come now to my father's ninetyeth birthday, which occurred October 11, 1894. The event came on Sunday and was one of those ideal and perfect days when summer, loth to leave, turns back to retrieve in sunshine and glow a loving smile of farewell. Early in the morning came friends with their gifts of fruit, flowers and various other acceptable tokens. The whole family were assembled and most of them accompanied my father to church, where the minister in his sermon

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paid a tribute to him in a few brief but fitting words. In the evening our rooms were filled with kindly friends and neighbors who brought congratulations in many cordial expressions of respect and affection, giving him a heart-felt pleasure which for the rest of his few years was a memory he loved to revert to.

Such was the enthusiasm and pleasure with which he accepted life with all that he did or thought or enjoyed, that a consciousness of age, infirmity, or indeed any of the ills physical or mental which long life often brings, was never expressed or apparent to himself or others. After we went to Cambridge, in the long evenings of music, to the chat of the younger people with their games and interests, he listened with eagerness and pleasure, and was often the last one to retire. His love for music was quite remarkable. He never liked what was loud and noisy, but to classic music he was the most eager listener, and once when asked if he was not tired of it he answered in his en-

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thusiastic way, "Oh no! I could never tire of music like that"—"that" happening to be Beethoven's Fifth Symphony.

CHAPTER XI.

Barre Days.



THE town of Barre was an interesting one, and had a personal attraction as being the home of my sister Susan and her family for many years. I have thought a chapter from its pages might interest my younger nieces and nephews. As all the family at various times spent weeks and months there it is still held in affectionate memory. It is one of the beautiful hill towns in central Massachusetts, about one hundred and forty miles from Barnstable, and took, in the days of stage coach travelling, a day and a half to compass the journey. As the distance then seemed very much farther than now, my mother always felt some one of us must be with my sister constantly, who was so far away from us all. The town was not only charmingly situated, but had many social attractions and advantages unusual to many country towns

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today. One of its early educational advantages was a state normal school, which, placed upon one of its highest hills, was quite a prominent landmark. Finely educated men and women who managed it added materially to the social attractions, as well as many agreeable women and men who sought its professional advantages.

The town of Barre itself had a delightful society of well-bred, cultivated people, among whom especially was a family of Thompsons, the head of whom was Rev. James Thompson, minister of the Unitarian church for more than fifty years. His daughters married in the place and were naturally leading families. Two brothers, prominent lawyers in Worcester, were Franklin and Augustus Bryant, the younger of whom married a daughter of the old doctor, one of whose children now lives in Boston. Dr. Thompson's only son was also a Unitarian minister who was pastor of the Salem Parish for many years, and later

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the church at Jamaica Plain now held by Rev. Charles F. Dole. Other Barre men, Gorhams, Robinsons, Mandells, Woods, were men who have made their mark in mercantile and professional life in Boston and other cities.

What with the charming position of the town with its green hills, beautiful scenery and social advantages, it was naturally one of the most attractive in Central Massachusetts. The central point of business was Barre Common, so called. This was a lovely green park which was encircled by many private residences, the hotel, business offices and stores. Roads diverged in all directions from the Common, whence delightful drives to Petersham, Athol, Ware and various other towns constantly attracted pleasure seekers and business men also. In winter when sleighing was the regular pastime, the hills were even more charming. The town with its large society of young men and women, though alert and busy, was not too occupied to find time for much pleasuring. A few

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miles from the Village Centre were beautiful farms with big, attractive houses, always open to friends and abounding in old-fashioned hospitality. My memory reverts to bright moonlight evenings when sleighs with their jingling bells went daneing over the white hills to some brightly lighted farm house, where around the big open wood fires we cracked nuts (and jokes), drank cider, ate apples, sung songs, told stories and finished with a moonlight ride home over the crackling snow.

Another attractive resort in summer was the Falls. This was a romantic spot, where over the green fields we walked through shady woods to this pretty valley, down which rushed this bounding waterfall, ending in a pretty brook whose green path we followed to fields beyond. It was always apparently an easy matter to muster a party of fifteen or twenty gentlemen and ladies on a bright morning for a walk across the fields to the Falls. So cordial was the spirit

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of the people that the least excuse, like the arrival of a stranger for a short visit, was a signal for every possible social pleasure to be thought of.

My sister Abby loved to tell of a delightful week's trip in a small stage coach with two gentlemen and two ladies, when at their own time and pleasure they travelled through the Connecticut valley, stopping at any little hotel as they journeyed in a leisurely sauntering way, taking in all the beauties of the scenery varied with glimpses of the pretty rivers and lakes. They stopped at some Wayside Inn at night, where they rested their horses and themselves till morning. Especially remembered was a call at Deerfield. Three of the party were musicians, one of the ladies the leading soprano in a Worcester church, and at midnight they strolled out into the village, giving the drowsy old town such a waking up as it never had before. A pleasant incident in their trip was a call on Dr. Washburn of

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Brattleboro. He was a relative of the Thompson family and lived just over the border line between Massachusetts and Vermont. This point was the Gretna Green (so called) because persons wishing to be married could do so by crossing the division line without publishing. In the first half of the 18th century the legal requirement was that an intention of marriage in Massachusetts was to be published two weeks before the event. This notice was usually placed in the vestibule of the church by the town clerk, from whom the marriage certificate was obtained. This publishment was evaded, if desired, by going out of the state, if only across the border line, which was the exact position of Dr. Washburn's house. One summer day on a pleasure drive two of the party suggested as a joke to play the game of marriage. They did so, and when the doctor took his pen to write their certificate and was informed the marriage was "in fun," he very gravely said, "You

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are legally married and must get yourselves out of the dilemma as best you can''—a wise rebuke for their inane foolery.

CHAPTER XII.

Mother.



IN continuing this sketch of my father's life, to omit a word of my dear mother would be an injustice to her and to him; for indeed she was the joy and pleasure of his life and the home life of us all. In consequence of her deafness, that he should assume every possible responsibility was a matter of course in which he never failed and impressed upon us to do likewise. I rejoice to realize his wishes were eagerly responded to, and in all household cares each took her turn in their time, especially in the housekeeping.

I recall her sweet face with the pretty soft lace cap and white hair, sitting in her armchair at the sunny window from which her bright eyes saw from the street every new comer with a quickened vision from the loss of her hearing. Especially on the arrival of a stranger her keen eyesight, and insight with a sort

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of sixth sense as well, summed up their character. For instance, in one of her letters to me when absent, she writes: "The new minister has arrived. I saw him pass on his way to church this morning and am afraid he will not be quite as gallant to the ladies as the Mr. W. who has just left town." She often amused us with her quickness in detecting when any scheme of mischief was in the air, and would say, "You needn't think I don't know what you are planning now."

She delighted in fancy work, and most of her last days were employed in making little gifts for anybody and everybody who happened in. Her work was done with a fineness and care that would easily eclipse the best work of today, when machines have outlived and demoralized that accomplishment. My father took great pride in her pretty handiwork, and indeed in every way gave her the same tender care which he exercised towards his children. In early days when the children were ill, he

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always cared for us at night, which, with his busy life and frequent ill health, was, after a day's work at his bench, no slight task.

My mother had a dear love of flowers, and my father's first thought in spring was for her garden. She had a special love of roses, and the first one that bloomed was put at my father's plate at the breakfast table. She loved to weed and gather her flowers with her own hands, and sometimes planted her seeds, when everything seemed to bloom for her and her small pretty bed was bright with flowers.

Here I wish to remind my nieces and nephews that the white rose bush now in the rear of the Barnstable house is a root from the same bush which was in the front yard when I was a child. It was taken originally from a tree in Dr. Savage's yard of what is now the Davis house two doors west of the Baptist church. It was given to my mother by Hope Savage, her old schoolmate and friend, who at the same time together learned

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the beautiful Floss needlework, a piece of which hangs in the sitting room in Barnstable with the inscription below, "Wrought by Nancy Phinney." Hope Savage became the second wife of Chief Justice Shaw, and occasionally accompanied her husband to Barnstable to hold court. She always came to see my mother, and it was very pleasant to hear the two old ladies call each other Hopey and Nancy, and talk over their school day friendship together. Recently his son Oakes Shaw, who bore his grandfather's name, was a summer resident of Barnstable, and he said to me, in reviewing old-time incidents, "Did you know that your mother and mine were considered the prettiest girls in Barnstable?" Of course to her children my mother was the most beautiful woman in the world. Every child's mother probably is, but a picture of her taken at eighty-three years of age, I think, would confirm the fact that she had much real beauty. If so was it not the reflection of a beautiful soul, chastened by long years of

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deafness and sad deprivation? Throughout all her life she never heard the voices of her children, and this was only one of the numerous pleasures denied her. In the face of all this never to have spoken a cross or impatient word, but always with a sunny smile to have greeted her children and friends, meant wonderful self control.

Her habit was to attend church in her early days, but as she could not hear a word of the sermon or service the duty was irksome, and at last she remained at home, quietly keeping her Sunday in the stillness of her room, with one of her favorite books, an old volume of Doctor Orville Dewey's sermons, of which she never seemed to tire down to the last days of her life. As I recall the young days when she did go, how lovely it was in summer, when I went to church dressed in my white dress, a damask rose pinned to my waist, with my father and mother, holding them with each hand by the way. My father in the week was such a busy man and my mother

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so totally deaf, they seldom went anywhere together save to church.

My father's evening was always by his fireside. Their picture hangs still in memory as I see them with silvered hair and pleasant faces, each in their own chairs and places year in and year out. Occasionally my mother would say, "Now Father, you ought to take your hat and cane and call on the minister;" he would always nod assent and say, "Yes, I must go," but he never went. In the afternoon we took our Sunday school books and dolls, and with Mother and Father went into the fields. Sunday evening was devoted to singing, and though that was before the days of a piano, my sister Louisa especially sang the old sweet melodies of "Child Amid the Flowers at Play," "The Messenger Bird," "Come to the Sunset Tree"—old English songs, past and gone save to the memory of a few—very few—who can recall them. In this connection I must repeat what has seemed to become a truism of the church-going habit—that its

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compulsory attendance is the plea for non observance today. As I think of it after many years it seems a far-off delight. The modern Sunday has endless resources the past knew little of, since games and certain other recreations are not now, as formerly, considered sacriligious. Sunday ought to be the happiest of the week days and yet be kept with a consciousness that it is so, and always should be made thus to the young. In a minister's family where I was intimate many years since, there was always some plan to make it different—a pleasant surprise on the tea table, a drive or recreation of any kind such as music, or something the children themselves plan and prepare for that time especially. It might seem stupid and dull to the society mothers, but a loving, sensible woman who wishes to bring her family up to be good men and women cannot fail to find some recreation in which she herself would be a leader or an interested partaker.

CHAPTER XIII.

Hospitality.



IT was the custom in olden times, when travelling was not as easy as it has been for the last quarter of a century, to entertain as an act of courtesy the various travelling temperance and other lecturers, who often came at their own expense, or who were compensated merely by the payment of their travelling expenses. As my father was notably a temperance man, it devolved upon him often to entertain the lecturers at our house. At this arrangement my impression is that mother did not go wild with enthusiasm, especially when she was obliged to give her best chamber to some reformed drunkard, whose personal habits had not experienced a change of heart. After a visit from one of these Bohemians she asserted herself and declared that her pretty white muslin-curtained bedstead (her pet pride) should not be desecrated again,

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and my father cheerfully informed her she should have her own way.

Years after, one winter afternoon, just about twilight, in a fearful blizzard, a man knocked at our dining room door and asked if a stranded traveller might have a night's lodging. Forgetting everything but his hospitable impulse, Father said, "Certainly, sir," and in the man walked. My father asked him his name, and with it the stranger gave the information that he was a Methodist minister who was taking a pedestrian tour through the Cape. I was the only one of the family at home just then, and when Father informed us of the liberty he had taken, Mother whispered to me that he was probably some highwayman who might murder us all in our beds. However, he proved to be quite a cheery old gentleman with a good appetite, and after a generous supper my father and he, with a howling storm outside, sat up till nearly midnight, when this angel una-

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wares entertained my father who in the morning parted from him with a God bless you and a cheery goodbye.

The only time I ever knew my father to turn the cold shoulder was once years after, and then it was to a female. One summer evening after a hot day, when we were all sitting at open windows or out of doors, there walked up the yard a tall woman with a loud voice who addressed my father with, "How do you do, Messmate?" My father rose in his courteous way, but in a tone which we understood said, "Pardon me, but I do not recognize you, madam." She insisted that she knew him as a young man and attended his wedding, and that she had stopped on her way to Nantucket to make him a visit. As our house was full of visitors he politely said he could not entertain her. When she gave him her maiden name he repeated with the same decisive tone, "I never saw or heard of you before." However, he put on his hat and walked with her to the hotel where she was landed for

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the night, and the next morning, to make assurance doubly sure, he escorted her to the train and presented her with a ticket to Nantucket. The fun my mother got out of this episode was worth the price of the ticket, and it was some time before she could get over the joke, which my father after awhile enjoyed quite as much as she did.

Our visitors, young and old, my father delighted in even more than we, and however long they stayed or how crowded our house was, he was never quite ready to say goodbye to them. A visit from three young ladies in Barre from slight misunderstanding came at a time when I was ill with typhoid fever. They were charming girls and attracted some delightful young men, whose Landau with a pair of horses and colored groom stood before our door every pleasant day for two weeks. There was no end to the fun they had, and each day they regaled me with their various excursions to neighboring towns, where on the borders of the pretty lakes they

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took their picnics, varied with games in the bowling alleys, and then had the drive home with tea and music in the evening at our house. We thought our house rather small at the time, but hospitality must have broadened it, for Saturday evening when the last stage coach of the week came in, two of my brothers-in-law unexpectedly arrived, but a room was found as large as the welcome they brought.

I would not give an impression that the hospitable spirit no longer exists; now the large things look small, then the small pleasures looked large. Since the days of millionaires the horoscope of life has changed, though happily the vision of late is becoming normal and its satisfactions (the durable ones, so called from our renowned authority, C. W. E.) are found from within, rather than from without. A measure of happiness within the reach of all is in the fulfillment of tasks that come to us daily always in a spirit of love, never in doubt or fear—

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the best and highest truth which
the new thought has evolved but
really is as old as the world
itself.

CHAPTER XIV.

Marriages,

1850-51,

James' Family.



THE years 1850 and 51 were marked by important changes. My sister Jane's marriage occurred in November, 1850, and that of my sisters Sarah and Caroline in 1851. In the spring of 1850 my brother Albert Alden was appointed inspector of customs in Boston, and removed with his family to East Cambridge, where they lived until his death in 1883. While a pleasure to have them nearer the old home, this removal ended our pleasant visits to Barre. The first three years of my sister Jane's life at Sandwich so near to us were very agreeable to her and to us. My father had many business friends there who gave my sister a cordial welcome, and it was memorable as the birth-place of her eldest son, our little Charlie as we loved to call him.

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From thence she removed to Taunton, and about a year after to Cambridge, in 1859, where she lived till the time of her death in 1888.

The death of all my brother James's children, of my sister Susan's and my sister Louisa's, and all of my sister Jane's save one is a difficult problem to solve. What with antecedents of unusually good constitution, careful training and with every best chance of improving their health, by travelling and skillful medical advice, that they should have been outlived by parents whose years were fully the sum allotted to men, is one of life's mysteries. One of my sister Susan's children came to an accidental death; the other two died in consumption. My sister Louisa's children all died from natural causes. My brother's children also died from consumption.

John Munroe, my brother's oldest son, was named for his grandfather. He was unusually handsome and joined his father in business, whose pride and de-

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light he was. He inherited from his maternal grandfather a mechanical taste and was skillful and clever in his work, which was developed in the making a chronometer. He presented it to the Washington observatory and for it he received from Prof. Bond a medal, which delighted his father and mother. He died at the age of twenty-five in consumption, and was soon followed by my brother's only daughter at twenty-four. She bore her grandmother's and my name, and as the only daughter was idolized by her parents. Nancy Elizabeth was a small, bright-eyed girl, with a buoyant temperament and a brilliant mind. Her father educated her at a private French school in New York, where she was taught to speak the language of the French teacher, and where she finished her musical education. After she left school she spent a winter in Philadelphia, whither she went to avoid the harsh New England climate. At a piano recital of professional pianists at the hotel she took the palm as the finest player.

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Her death occurred about a year and a half after this, and was followed by that of her brother James, who had long been an invalid. This loss left my brother with only one child living, his son Russell, the youngest of the family. He seemed to be in good health for some years, and at his request my brother established a business in Boston. He married and took rooms at one of the apartment hotels, where he lived with his young wife in the enjoyment of his health and work for some few years. A hoarseness seized him, which proved to be the beginning of the end. By his physician's advice he went to Rangely Lakes in the interior of Maine, and his health seemed visibly to improve. But a feeling of homesickness sent him back to Massachusetts, where he came to his old New Bedford home. He took a slight cold apparently on the journey and died in his father's house three days after his return. Such was the pitiful history of my brother's and his wife's experience. A few years after my brother was called

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to part with his wife, who died of cancer. My poor brother lived to find himself a lonely man in his beautiful home, where he received from faithful servants and the attention of his son's wife untiring devotion to his physical wants.

So ended the sad story of a man whose generous impulses and affectionate nature brought him many kind friends on whom he showered his gifts with a warm heart and open hand. Nothing more desolate could have been than the icy cold day when he was taken to the cemetery to sleep beside the wife and four children he so dearly loved.

CHAPTER XV.

Politics.



I HAVE said nothing of my father's political views, though it is quite likely they were far from negative. He was too busy to enter practically into political life had he been inclined, but my impression is that he was conservative and in days before the war voted the Whig ticket. I am sure he disapproved of slavery, though two years of winter in Virginia gave him the opportunity to see the patriarchal and picturesque side of the question, which was its best side. While he decried the moral view of the system he felt it as demoralizing to the slave holder as it was wrong to the slave. Especially did he feel it was a wrong to the women as well as to the men. He described the Southern women as indolent, luxurious and free from any sense of the serious side or the responsibilities of life. While charming in manners, polite and refined, they

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lacked the good sense and intelligence of the practical Northern wife and mother. Though stoutly opposed to any moral compromise of the contention, he was one of many who hoped and believed the questions that produced the war might have been settled without it. He had a theory that if the government had proclaimed Freedom to every colored person born after a given time the misery of it would have been gradually mitigated. To free them all at once he felt would have been cruel to both slave and slave holder. He did not dream that a prophet like Booker Washington would arise to teach and elevate the colored man by the only way possible of educating the brain through the hand, and so keep faith with both races.

My father always found time to cast his vote, and his old neighbor, David Crocker, high sheriff of the county, never failed during his life to take him to the town house on election, a courtesy his son Frederick followed to his death. He deeply

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grieved with all the country at the tragic death of our president. He was a great admirer of the elder John Adams and James Otis. When I was eight years of age my father and mother took me in a chaise to West Barnstable to see the historic home of James Otis. I distinctly recall his showing me the beautiful wainscotting in the hall, the lovely paneled wall, and carving of the dark mahogany stair railing. It is a comfort to feel that the patriotic spirit of today would have preserved the beautiful old Otis and Hancock houses, which modernism held no respect for till within the times since the war, when our people and the nation are eager to preserve its traditions.

CHAPTER XVI.

1849, Opera, Jenny Lind.



It was in the early spring of 1849, when returning from a winter's visit, that we three sisters, Sarah, Caroline and I, met in Boston and by the courtesy of our cousin Charlotte Haley, visited there for a week and heard our first Italian opera. It was given at the Howard Athaeneum, which was then Boston's best theatre. The opera was *Somnambula*, and the prima donna a Miss Ostinelli, the daughter of an old music teacher in Portland. It was her first appearance in Boston, and she delighted the audience with the pretty melodies of "Still So Gently O'er Me Stealing," and "The Heart Bowed Down." I should say it was very well put upon the stage. The scenery was in keeping, and her sweet musical voice, well cultivated, left a pleasant impression upon the audience. She gave *Somnambula*, *Lucia* and others with much

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effect, and afterwards took the name of Bicaccianti. Subsequently, on the event of the two sisters' marriage—Sarah and Caroline—we all went to hear together the wonderful Jenny Lind. Was she really the most wonderful singer in the world? or was it a charm of person and character? or perhaps it was the choice of old familiar melodies, such as "Oh Had I the Wings of a Dove," "The Last Rose of Summer," and the beautiful "Come Unto Him" of Handel's, which enchanted her large audiences. She gave generously to various charities, and so established a reputation in the affections and remembrance of the people that remains to this day. She married Otto Goldschmidt, who performed as pianist at her concerts, and returned with him to Sweden, her native country. When in Boston she made her home in one of the houses in Louisburg Square, upon which I look from my window in Boston.

From Boston my sisters and their husbands journeyed to the

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Catskills, and returned in June to their home at the Thacher House, which was their abiding place until their own houses were built, both of which they now occupy with their children.

On the return from the visit in 1849 we brought as a gift to Father and Mother our Daguerreotypes. They were each put into pretty morocco cases and given to our mother and father as our returning gift to them.

This was the last stage coach journey we made together. The train brought us to Plymouth, and the railroad was not extended to Barnstable until some years after—as nearly as I recall it was about 1854. The fatigue and tiresomeness of stage coach riding was not then realized or even thought of. We were young and full of the joyousness of life, with much to hear and tell of our winter's visits, and, what was best of all, we were going home, which after all is the great delight of going away.


Looking back as I must in writing these words, it seems to me now that we as a family were

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unusually exempt from the many sad losses and experiences which often occur in large families. The death of my sister Caroline's two infants, and the loss of our dear good brother-in-law James Knowles, which took place twenty-five years after his marriage, were the only sad events in that long time till my father's death in 1879. After that the numbers rapidly diminished, as must be the history of every large family.

CHAPTER XVII.

“The Universe.”

 WENTY-THREE years in a University town ought to leave some impression, not only of the place, but of what makes a place. To the natives it means “The Universe.” When you are in it, possibly the chill of the social atmosphere impedes the proper circulation, and therefore those on a lower plane cannot from the nature of things get the right temperature of its lofty heights. Then there is the quickened pulse of its inhabitants which confuses one in making a diagnosis when the condition mentally is so superior. To lower mortals, such as are not born in that sphere, the vision is changed; one only sees through a glass darkly, and even then the vision is so remote that everything is indefinite. The stranger must climb and look down, or descend and look up, which is really the proper attitude, for the lower level is the only safe

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one, and wings are not allowed to any from the lower hemispheres. But as you can occasionally judge of a tree by the bud (I mean only learned people can do this, but as there are none other in the Universe) one must take the children of these extraordinary forbears to know and recognize from whence and where they sprouted. It must be a tremendous elevation to live up to, this one of the Universe, but if you can dig low enough and high enough and narrow enough there is no more to do. These prodigies astonish their forbears, but that is what forbears are for.

In the little village where I once not exactly lived, but ate and drank and slept, there were these hyper-human productions, which I question have ever yet been classified or catalogued. One was a boy who astonished his governess by soliloquising thus after having received a box of crayons for a Christmas gift: "When I die I shall take these crayons to Heaven with me in

my trunk." The answer was, "You cannot carry your trunk to Heaven." "Oh yes," he said, "I can. When people die their souls go up to God, and their trunks go out to Mt. Auburn. I see them go by every day, and sometimes they have feathers on the top." Smart boy, but he was a University professor's son! What a pity these wonderful children should have to exploit their energies in putting crape upon door bells, and breaking street lantern glass, and rolling babies in their carts on the railroad track to see how near they can go and not have them run over, etc., beside calling at houses and asking to see the new parlor carpet because he heard a lady say that every time she saw it it made her sick, etc. But of course these remarkable prodigies are in the Universe, and with these wonderful wings they must break their shell, especially as infants as soon as they begin to talk are taught to call a part of the Universe the "Abomination of Desolation," an accomplishment which surpasses that of learning

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Greek, for when everything else is learned what can these poor little children do with these very remarkable minds? It is such an honor to be allowed to live in this Universe. You must be sure in the first move to lower your head or something or somebody may hit you. Not that your head is of any consequence if you are not born there. After that first step you are expected to do all sorts of things which the elect precious do, but you are not supposed to receive in return even thanks, because why? You are not of "The Elect." If you accidentally meet these superior beings you are not known, and you are to understand that only within the pale of your inferior position is there any chance for civility to you, for you do not belong in Our Universe. Understand yourself as only a bridge for people to walk over who cannot get there by any other way—and be sure and remember if you are made a door mat of, you must lift your head and acknowledge the courtesy, for they are in the Universe and you are

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not. If you meet these superior beings and they are polite enough to say, "Holloa! where did you come from now?" all you need say "I have come from nowhere but I am going straight to "The Universe." That is all that can be expected in this world or the next.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Jane's Family.



Y dear sister Jane I wish to speak especially of as, in consequence of her elder sister Susan's early marriage, she became, as my father expressed it, her mother's right hand. She had the natural mother instinct, and I as a weakly child recall nothing like the pleasure of sitting in Jane's lap. It was quite reasonable with my mother's deafness that the oldest member should take next to the mother's place. She was capable, executive and industrious, and for several years, quite in spite of my father's wish, she made all the younger children's dresses and also took a hand in making or trimming their bonnets and hats. She was a dear, good, faithful soul, intelligent and sensible, and mothered us all to the last days of her life. My father fully appreciated her, and after her marriage, when her husband's business compelled moving from place to

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place, he bought the house in Cambridge, which she retained as her home for the rest of her days.

She had three children, two sons and a daughter, of whom only one is now living. Her youngest child was a sweet faced, blue-eyed boy, with pink cheeks and golden hair and naturally his mother's idol. From birth he was never well, and though he lived to three and a half years he developed slowly, giving no hope of improvement. While this very helplessness endeared him only the more to his mother's heart, this very condition I believe reconciled her much to his death, and she always spoke of him in a tender voice as "My poor little Harry."

Here I desire to give special tribute to her dear Charlie, whose death was to me a great grief. From a little boy he had been, from his delicate health, more in Barnstable with me than with his mother, who was burdened with constant removals, her rather delicate children, and also the added one of her hus-

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band's mother, who after the family removed to Cambridge was one of the household till her death. Our Charlie, as we always called him, had a temperament that would not let him rest except when asleep. How vividly it comes back to me with what a dance he began the day, standing before the window, whence, before he was half dressed, he would fly to the top of the hill to put up his little flag. As a sort of recreation he went to the village school, and it was amusing to see what a regiment of boys he led who called him on their way. It was pitiful, with all this super-energy, when, before ten years of age, he suddenly became lame. It was the beginning of hip disease, which developed rapidly, and after the best medical advice, as he failed to improve, I took him to a specialist in Boston. His little sweet face attracted the sympathy and attention of every one when I took him out for his walk on his little crutches, and all the young men in the opposite house where we boarded were

eager to take him up and down the stairs, and he was as merry over it as if it was the best joke in the world. With his active temperament and natural freedom which is the boy's prerogative, the sweetness with which he bore it all was wonderful. He was never ill natured or irritable, even when in pain, and this manly spirit lasted him to the end.

After awhile he gave up his crutches, which I have always kept, and the shortening of the leg was supplied by a thick boot so that in years after he was able to take long walks and do some light work. Later on his Uncle James found a place in his business for him. He was with me at the time of this appointment and though glad for him, that with his ambitious nature he could find himself useful, I shall still never forget the pang it brought when I realized I never was to have my own little boy again in Barnstable. He never however lost the opportunity of coming to me for a holiday and his summer vacation was always at Grandpa's house in Barnstable.

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He loved the air and freedom of the town, and when his health failed it was there and there only he wished to go. His sister Mary was always his best comrade and their mutual tastes in music and books held them always together. He was especially fond of music and always had his season's tickets to the Symphony concerts. He was devoted to mathematics and chemistry. He picked up German enough to give himself much relaxation, and a chemistry student in my sister's family told me he went ahead of him in that science. His high carnival as a little boy was the yearly Cattle Show at Barnstable. He started early Monday morning for the Fair grounds, and from then till Thursday night we only caught flying glimpses of him. Every hour of the four days he was in a heaven of delight. Each night he returned full of wonderful stories of the side shows, about the wild men of Borneo, the woman with the two heads, and all other horrors, with which he regaled and astonished his grandfather.

He was on hand as a little fellow in all the excitement of the village from the killing and squealing of a pig to the upsetting of a boat, runaway horse and all the rest. In spite of all this wonderful vitality he was here and there and always the perfect little gentleman. He could never endure profanity or vulgarity in speech or manners, and all his instincts were refined and pure. He died at thirty-five, leaving behind only the sweetest and most cherished memory.

I have said that my nephew and his sister were, from a similar and affectionate disposition, the best of comrades, and after the death of all the family save Mary, she with no special preparation took her mother's house and carried along the family who filled it for the coming seven years. She was up to that time always the devoted daughter. Through her mother's last painful illness she was her only attendant till within a few days of her death. Her faithful and unswerving sense of duty with an abiding love and natural con-

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scientiousness challenged her devotion to the utmost of her strength and ability. Then as now no self-pleasure or indulgence tempted her to failure of the smallest obligation. In its broadest sense the New England conscience has possessed and controlled her to the sacrifice of things she loves best. Should I try to express all her faithful love and devotion to me in words I should only the more realize how impossible are words to express one's feelings; indeed if words could express our best feelings they would not be worth expressing. If only to assuage the loneliness of my life after my sister Abby's death, her presence and untiring devotion has been to me its one great solace and support. I have thus far tried to refrain from anything personal, but I cannot deny my pen the few imperfect words which are only a suggestion of much more than I can put into this brief space.

I have omitted to say a word of our good brother-in-law Wilkes Allen, the kind husband

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of my sister Jane and affectionate father of his children. No man ever started in life with a more ambitious desire to attain the highest success. His kindness of heart with unusual gentleness of manner and disposition made him many warm friends. It is no exaggeration to say none knew him but to love him; these qualities with a certain timidity unfitted him to cope with the world, and though most lovable, honorable and generous he was not what the world deems a success. His limitations were somewhat supplied by the unusual executive ability of his wife, who quite as a matter of course assumed certain duties which usually devolve upon the head of a family. An accident to the muscles of his foot prevented him from pursuing his profession of dentistry, so my sister supplemented by taking into her house, which was large and commodious, several persons, among whom were members of James Russell Lowell's family, a half sister, aunt cousin and nephew, Percival Lowell, who

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afterwards became family friends. Prof. Shaler, with his wife and child, spent their first married year under her care, and at various times other people of note and reputation in Cambridge made their home with her.

CHAPTER XIX.

Yarmouth Families.

 Omit the mention of my father's grandchildren now living without a word would be a pleasure I should be sorry to deprive myself of. That their good character, good morals and general prosperity would be a joy to my father I need not say.

Charles Swift was editor of a county paper for many years, and while he lived his pen was always ready to uphold every good public and private act of citizenship. His style was unusually finished and keen, and his editorials would have done justice to the columns of the New York Tribune or Daily Advertiser. As a family man he was pre-eminent, and in spite of public service as senator to the Massachusetts legislature and a member of the governor's council, his first, last and highest devotion was to his large family. I am proud to feel they have done him honor in their positions, two

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of whom are in government service, one judge of the Circuit Court, and the youngest ably filling his father's place as editor and publisher of the county paper which is the chief organ of the Republican party on Cape Cod.

The death of my dear brother-in-law James Knowles when his children were young, leaving three sons and two daughters, gave him no opportunity to witness the fulfillment of his ambitious intention concerning their future. He was able to send his oldest son to Cambridge, where he had an honorable graduation and attended the Law school, establishing a prosperous career for himself in his profession in Boston. His next son in age when sixteen went into his father's store as clerk and not long after, before he was twenty, assumed the entire charge of the business and is now spoken of as the S. S. Pierce of Cape Cod. Both these sons are married though neither have children. One younger son who bears his

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father's name is in prosperous business and is blessed with one son who bears the name of his father, grandfather and great-grandfather. The two daughters, who live at home, are daily watchers of their hopelessly invalid mother and also superintending the house with its various cares and duties.

The daughters of my brother Charles, though living, should not be omitted as kind, affectionate and dutiful in the least as well as greatest obligations of home and all that it menas. Sarah M. Swift has been distinguished in stenography by an appointment as official stenographer for Suffolk county, in which office she has shown unusual ability and also been given important duties of special work in the profession.

Of my two sisters Sarah and Caroline now living, I can only add my word of affectionate sisterly tribute to them as wise, loving and faithful mothers whose children must rise up to call them blessed.

CHAPTER XX.

Character.



COME now to the most important part and also the most difficult in this unpretending record of my father, as I attempt to give some adequate analysis of his strong and decided character. I have tried to show its domestic side in the devotion to his family, to his business, to his sense of obligation as a good citizen, all of which convey something of his sincere, conscientious and moral principle. But in his higher obligation to his church, to his Christian belief, to his God and his neighbor, in each and all of each consisted an abiding principle which was first and last and always uppermost in his heart and life. In his youth he became a member of the Unitarian church, and was for many years deacon of the Barnstable church. He was superintendent of the Sunday school for years, and leader of a large Bible class

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consisting of teachers and students. In his family reading of the Bible he chose the Epistles of St. Paul and the Gospel of John, which were his favorites.

It is not easy to go back and turn over the leaves of a life that in sincerity was an open book, to analyze qualities on which time and age have cast a softened light, and easily to delineate them with a pen. With his high moral sense and lofty purpose, a conscience void of offence toward God and man, reverent spirit, a daily sense of dependence on a higher Power, all these were the governing rules which dominated his life and work. Do not the elements which go to produce spirituality have a beginning in the homely virtues of right living?

After the hurry of his life was over and its work taken from his hands, thrown upon his own inward resources, an unwonted peace seemed to take possession of him. I recall him in his easy chair, with folded hands, and my dear mother always in his sight, quietly looking out, but intently

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thinking, apparently. I can but believe his mind was dwelling on the past and future with an inward consciousness of Peace and quietness that only a heart at rest with itself could give. For him there was no such thing as age; all his impulses and sympathies were as alert as ever, and the ninety years and more found him with that joyousness of heart which no silvered hair or bedimmed vision can cloud.

And so day after day passed in tranquil repose, till one morning, without pain or any apparent consciousness that his hour had come, he lay down and closed his eyes, "like one that wraps the drapery of his couch about him and lies down to pleasant dreams." The thought of him comes to me in the old hymn of Mrs. Barbauld in her sweet adieu to Life:

Life! We've been long together,
Through pleasant and through
cloudy weather;
'Tis hard to part when friends
are dear—
Perhaps 'twill cost a sigh, a tear;

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Then steal away, give little
warning,
Choose thine own time;
Say not "Good night" but in
some brighter clime
Bid me "Good morning."

It is not easy to give a true idea of character in words, for while one may have an ideal in their mind, no pen can make its lights and shades as in a picture. No one living is faultless, yet there are elements in character which require a certain alchemy to analyze. The real and permanent qualities go to make the sum total of a good man. It is what he really is, and not as his neighbors may see him, not indeed as he may see himself, but as he is known to the Searcher of all hearts. He must be true in intent and purpose, and to be thus we call a man conscientious. In this transitory world we deem any man good who, in spite of often infirmities and hereditary disabilities, keeps steadily on to his purpose of fidelity in the light which is given him, in whatever code or faith he believes.

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holding to the highest standards, and so fitting himself to live and serve in his own sphere. Thus he sheds around him an unconscious influence that is felt if not expressed. In turn environment makes in part his character. Ambitious as my father was for himself and his children, it was not that they should be rich, but that they should be good men and women. He was much grieved in his last days by the loss of many dear grandchildren. In his love and affection, he often said he knew no difference between them and his very own. Were he living now I am sure he would rejoice in the temperance, industry and integrity of his seven grandsons. He also took great pleasure and delight in his granddaughters. To one of them, especially, who was the oldest at that time, when quite a little girl, having noticed an ambitious desire to be helpful to her mother, he brought from Boston a pretty rosewood workbox as, he said, a little reward for being "such a good girl."

I do not forget that in giving

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this word picture of my father's character every word is dictated by love and by a somewhat more close and affectionate introspection of his inner life and thought than other members of the family might command. Being the youngest of the family and always in the home my daily opportunity was increased for watching all these little traits of character which those who had left home and who had their lives absorbed in their own cares could not realize. A few words from the village newspaper I copy as a kind and just tribute, which his family gratefully appreciated. The closing sentences are as follows:

“The influence and example of Deacon Munroe have always been of public service and are worthy of remembrance and imitation. Every good cause of religion, morality, education and progress found in him a willing helper. By constant attention to business, by patient industry and systematic frugality of life, he accumulated a competency. If the young men of the present age

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would follow in the same path, they might expect length of days, riches and honor. His life has been full of usefulness and he has gone to his rest, like a shock of corn fully ripe for the Harvest."

The old hymn of Sir Henry Wotton so pictures my father's character that I quote it below:

"How happy is he born or taught,

Who serveth not another's will,
Whose armor is his honest thought,

And simple Truth his highest skill;

Who God doth late and early pray

More of His grace than gifts to lend,

And walks with man from day to day,

As with a Brother and a Friend.

This man is freed from servile bands

Of hope to rise or fear to fall,
Lord of himself, though not of lands,

And having nothing, yet hath all."

CHAPTER XXI.

Finis.



AS the succeeding years pass and the family history means the scattered threads of memory that hold together those who are left, it becomes a little difficult to hold up its mirror to the faces of those who are living. These fragmentary memories, when brought together ever so connectedly, give no very clear outline even of a family life in which so many figures are represented. To do justice to all and neglect none would be my greatest wish, but these words are for eyes that are still open to the light of present scenes. On the one hand I must not be too personal and on the other I must be neglectful of no one. It is not without a sense of the impossibility of satisfying myself that I bring my unfinished story to a close. A pen portrait of friends whose faces you can never forget, a true representation of character that merits more than one

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can put in words, is after all an unfinished and impossible attempt. If however memories which I hope are only pleasant and true to life are in any measure revived of those dear ones whom here we can see no more, I shall be glad if this imperfect transcription will give any satisfaction or comfort.



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